

Lute**Claims**

1. Lute having a bulging sound box tapering down to a virtual point and a neck attached to one side of the point comprising a fingerboard fretted and bearing a peg box at its free end, the sound box consisting of a vaulted back whose rim is everywhere curved outward on its way from one side of the neck to the other side and lying in a plane, and of a face whose edge is connected to the rim of the back, provided on its under side facing the back with laths and transverse ribs, provided on its top opposed to the under side with an end piece connected to the face in the third of a face centerline farthest removed from the neck along said centerline and in its lengthwise extent transverse to said centerline, several strings being stretched between the peg box and the end piece, and that in the half of the centerline nearest the neck one or more apertures are made between the upper and the under side, **characterized** in that the face (12) including the tailpiece (15) is vaulted outward, the greatest distance (20) of the vaulted face above the plane (11) being at least 2 mm, and in that on the under side of the face (12) an area (21) free from transverse ribs is provided, corresponding to a first part (22) more or less between the tailpiece (15) and the area (24) of the rim (13) and a second part (23) of about the same size bordering on the first part between the mutually opposed rim portions (25; 26), said area free from transverse ribs being at the same time configured as a lath-free area (21) or provided with laths (27) in centrally symmetrical arrangement.

2. Lute according to claim 1, characterized in that the laths (27) run substantially in the direction of the lengthwise extent of the centerline (16).

3. Lute according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the laths (27) run at an acute angle to the direction of the lengthwise extent of the centerline (16).
4. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the laths (27) run fan shaped in such manner that their mid-length axes (28) intersect at an imaginary point on the centerline (16) of the face (12) or its prolongation in the direction of the neck (4).
5. Lute according to either of claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the laths (27) run parallel to the centerline (16).
6. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that an even number of laths (27) is provided.
7. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that an odd number of laths (27) is provided.
8. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the thickness of the face (12) diminishes, at least in the region of the rib-free area (21), towards the rim (13).
9. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 7, characterized in that the ends of the transverse ribs (29) rest on abutments.
10. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that at least two laths pass without contact beneath at least that transverse rib which lies closest to the rib-free area (21), where the transverse ribs comprise a tunnel-shaped recess together with said laths at the point of intersection.
11. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the fingerboard (5) is prolonged by a face segment on the face (12) and in that the arrangement of the frets is continued on the face segment.

12. Lute according to claim 10, characterized in that the face (12) is reinforced on its under side with a piece of hardwood (31) in the region of the face segment.
13. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 11, characterized in that eight strings (17) are strung, tuned C - D - E - A - d - g - h - e'.
14. Lute according to any of claims 1 to 11, characterized in that fifteen single strings are strung, tuned G - A - B - C - D - E - F - G - A - B - d - f - a - d' - f, or G - A - B - C - D - E - F - G - A - B - d - f - a - d' - g'.